

Welcome Message

Welcome to the 2003 IEEE Computer Society Conference on Computer Vision and Pattern Recognition (CVPR 2003), held on June 18-20, 2003 in Madison, Wisconsin. The venue is the Monona Terrace Community and Convention Center, originally designed by Frank Lloyd Wright 60 years ago. The venue offers ample room for both oral and poster presentations, with close proximity to downtown Madison and the University of Wisconsin-Madison.

Following a very successful CVPR 2001, the response to the call for papers for this year's conference was equally strong. Nearly 1100 abstracts were submitted by the abstract submission deadline, resulting in 905 full paper submissions. Of these, 60 papers were accepted for oral presentation and 149 papers were accepted for poster presentation in Madison. These acceptance numbers reflect several considerations, including a desire to increase the exposure of poster presentations, with fewer posters presented each day and more time allocated to the poster sessions.

Trying to select such a small fraction of papers among the many deserving submissions is clearly a daunting task. We received more than 2700 reviews written by 254 auxiliary reviewers and the 135 program committee members. Our 21 area chairs were responsible for overseeing the reviewing of 40-45 submissions each. To aid this process, we implemented four innovations, the goal of which was to improve consistency among reviews and to increase the information available with which to judge each paper. First, all forms used by reviewers, program committee members and area chairs relied on descriptive terms, rather than numerical scores that often have ambiguous meaning. Second, program committee members were asked to rank-order the 15-25 papers assigned to them. When used in conjunction with the absolute assessments in each review, these rankings provided increased resolution and helped us better compare the opinions of different reviewers. This also ensured that program committee members would assess and rank all papers assigned to them, even if they received help from auxiliary reviewers. Third, we conducted a two-week discussion period after all reviews were received, during which reviewers had access to all reviews of papers assigned to them and they could discuss each others' reviews via email. This period was used to correct reviewer oversights, to discuss strong disagreements among reviewers, and to improve the quality of reviews when an area chair felt that the content was insufficient. For many submissions these discussions led to a significant improvement in the quality of reviews. Fourth, authors were given the opportunity to see the reviews of their papers and to write a brief response before any acceptance decisions were made. This enabled authors to respond to criticisms and to alert the relevant area chair to technical misunderstandings and oversights in the reviews. Following the author response period, area chairs had 10 days to digest all this information. This involved rank-ordering their papers, making absolute recommendations (oral/poster/reject), writing rationale for their recommendations that was directed to the conference board and, in many cases, writing a summary response that authors would receive along with reviews.

Final decisions on most papers were made at the Area Chairs' Meeting held in Toronto on February 14 and 15. During the meeting, area chairs were divided into small groups of related sub-fields to discuss their papers, to merge their rankings, and reach consensus on possible oral and poster presentations. These recommendations were then discussed by the entire area chair committee, resulting in final acceptance decisions for most oral and poster papers in the CVPR program. In the 10 days following the meeting, we asked area chairs to bring forward additional papers that they felt should be re-considered for possible acceptance and we went through many additional papers to identify possible oversights. Final decisions on these papers were made by the program chairs, after a rank-ordering that took into account area chair recommendations and additional discussions during this final period.

The reviewing process was double-blind. The program co-chairs did not submit papers. At the area chair meeting, papers for which an area chair had a conflict of interest were not handled with the rest of the papers. Rather, they were assessed by a separate group of area chairs that had no conflicts with any papers.

Finally, no reviewing process is perfect. Not all papers can be uniformly well reviewed and assessed by members of the program committee and the area chairs. As a consequence, some deserving contributions were probably overlooked. We deeply regret these occurrences, and we apologize to authors of such papers. We encourage all those in the CVPR community to continue to improve the quality and thoughtfulness of reviewing.

The broader organization of CVPR has gone smoothly with the extraordinary care and attention of those on the organizing committee. We are indebted to Chuck Stewart for doing a fabulous job with the local arrangements, and to Pat Flynn for his diligence and experience as Publications Chair. Bill Freeman and Kim Boyer have pulled together exciting and innovative short courses and workshops. By including the minimal cost of workshops and short courses into the conference registration fee, we hope that attendance and participation will grow significantly. Finally, many thanks to Stefano Soatto for coordinating the demo sessions and handling demo submissions, and to Horst Haussecker for his efforts in raising funds from corporate sponsors during such tough economic times.

The web site for the paper submissions was significantly altered this year to support the different reviewing process. This was possible only with the initial work of David Gering and Lilla Zollei who developed the web site for CVPR 2001. We are very grateful to Shengdong Zhao for his extensive modifications to the submission program. Peter Meer and Chris Taylor both contributed very useful ideas concerning reviewer assignments and fusing ranking information provided by reviewers.

We are also grateful to the many staff members of the IEEE Computer Society in helping with fiscal matters and the publication of the proceedings. In particular, we thank Kristine Weiland and Danielle Martin for their support.

We hope you find the conference both stimulating and enjoyable.

Chuck Dyer and Pietro Perona
General Chairs

David Fleet and Kyros Kutulakos
Program Chairs